

BEFORE THE
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001

PERIODIC REPORTING
(PROPOSAL THIRTEEN)

Docket No. RM2015-7

**NOTICE OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE OF
PROVIDING INFORMAL RESPONSES TO UPS QUESTIONS**
(May 28, 2015)

To aid in the preparation of its June 8th submission in this docket, UPS recently sought clarification of several items relating to data previously provided by the Postal Service. To facilitate timely information exchange, the Postal Service agreed to respond directly to the questions on an informal basis. The questions posed and the responses provided are attached, so that all parties and the Commission may have access to the same information.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

By its attorney:

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Responses of the Postal Service to Informal Questions Posed by UPS

1. In March, the Postal Service provided DOIS Parcel counts for the zip codes and dates included in the collection volume study. The Preface included with these data indicated that these counts refer to “Large” Parcels.
 - a. Which of the three types of parcels described in the quotation from Professor Bradley’s report are included in the DOIS parcel counts?
 - b. Are the DOIS parcel count data derived from machine counts or manual counts?
 - c. If the DOIS parcel data are derived from manual counts, please indicate who is responsible for carrying out these counts.

RESPONSE:

- a. The parcel counts in the DOIS file are a subset of the (generally unknown) sum of in-receptacle and deviation parcels. The carrier supervisor records parcels in DOIS that appear to meet either of the following two criteria: 1) larger than a shoebox or 2) heavier than two pounds. Thus, a parcel can be correctly recorded in DOIS based on its size or weight, but if it fits into the letter/flat mail receptacle, it is an in-receptacle parcel. In sum, the parcels entered in DOIS are generally the larger/heavier pieces, so they are more likely to be deviation parcels, but they could also be in-receptacle parcels. There is no method to identify which DOIS parcels are in-receptacle or deviation, as the delivery address is not considered during the numeration process.
- b. Manual counts.
- c. Carrier supervisor.

2. The national 3999 dataset produced by the Postal Service includes a field labeled "PARCELS_3999."
- a. Do the numbers contained in this field represent parcel counts?
 - b. Which of the three types of parcels described in the quotation from Professor Bradley's report are included in the 3999 parcel counts?
 - c. Are the 3999 parcel count data derived from machine counts or manual counts?
 - d. If the 3999 parcel data are derived from manual counts, please indicate who is responsible for carrying out these counts.
 - e. What definitional differences, if any, are there between the parcel volumes reported in the DOIS data and the parcel volumes reported in the 3999 study?

RESPONSE:

- a. Yes.
 - b. The counts in the "PARCELS_3999" field are the DOIS parcel counts for the same date. See the response to question 1a for a description of the methods used to populate the DOIS parcel counts.
 - c. Manual counts.
 - d. Carrier supervisor.
 - e. None. The volumes for all shapes, including parcels, in the Form 3999 database are pulled from DOIS for the date of the street observation.
3. The national 3999 dataset produced by the Postal Service includes a field labeled "PARCEL_HOURS_3999."
- a. Please describe what hours are included in this field.
 - b. There are numerous instances within the 3999 dataset in which there are positive values in the "PARCEL_HOURS_3999" field and zero values

in the "PARCELS_3999" field. Please indicate whether such apparent inconsistencies imply the presence of erroneous data values, or whether such situations arise in actual practice.

c. If such situations do arise within actual practice, please describe the circumstances in which such outcomes can occur.

d. There are numerous instances within the 3999 dataset in which there are zero values in the "PARCEL_HOURS_3999" field and positive values in the "PARCELS_3999" field. Please indicate whether such apparent inconsistencies imply the presence of erroneous data values, or whether such situations arise in actual practice.

e. If such situations do arise within actual practice, please describe the circumstances in which such outcomes can occur.

RESPONSE:

- a. In the collection of the 3999 data, the route examiner records all instances when additional time over loading mail into the receptacle was needed for handling any parcel, regardless of its size/weight.
- b. The main purpose of the Form 3999 is to accurately measure the time needed to perform various street activities. One of those activities is the additional time needed for handling parcels. While it is quite possible that a parcel count was missed in DOIS, other situations also do exist in practice where the "PARCEL_HOURS_3999" field is nonzero and the "PARCELS_3999" field is zero.
- c. This could arise, for example, if a carrier has a parcel that does not appear to meet either of the criteria to be counted in DOIS (see response to question 1a.), but causes additional handling time, perhaps because it does not fit in the receptacle. This situation results in the parcel not being counted in DOIS, but nonzero parcel hours recorded on the Form 3999.

- d. The main purpose of the Form 3999 is to accurately measure the time needed to perform various street activities. One of those activities is the additional time needed for handling parcels. While it is possible for an erroneous parcel count to be included in DOIS, other situations also do exist in which the "PARCELS_3999" volume field is nonzero and the "PARCELS_HOURS_3999" field is zero.
- e. This situation could arise if the carrier has a "heavy" parcel which is counted in DOIS because of its weight, but which doesn't require any additional time on the route. Then no parcel hours would be recorded in the Form 3999 data, despite a parcel being recorded in DOIS.